

Minutes of Regular Meeting of November 9, 2005

CALL TO ORDER 7:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Feierbach, Mathewson, Bauer, Metropulos, Warden

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT: None

Staff Present: Interim City Manager Crist, City Attorney Zafferano, Community Development Director de Melo, Public Works Director Davis, Finance Director Fil, Interim Assistant City Manager Gonzalez, Fire Chief Lowden, Police Chief Mattei, City Clerk Cook.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by City Clerk Cook.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Helen Putnam Award Presentation

Rebecca Elliott, League of California Cities Representative, presented the League's highest award for public safety to the Belmont Safe Schools Program. She noted that 46 award applications were submitted, 26 received recognition, seven of which were recipients of the Grand Prize.

Mayor Warden credited the Belmont Police Department and Belmont schools for their work in this program which earned this award.

Police Chief Mattei introduced members of staffs from the various schools involved in the program. He also noted the work of Sergeant Halleran and Officers Stenquist and Bradley.

Councilmembers expressed their appreciation to the Police Department and the schools.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Bauer congratulated the proponents of Measure F for a well-run campaign.

Mayor Warden stated that Belmont's voter turnout was over 50 percent. He announced that the last day of the seasonal Farmer's Market would be held on November 20. He also announced that the dedication of City Hall and the Council Reorganization meeting would be held on December 13 starting at 5:00 p.m.

City Clerk Cook announced that Congresswoman Anna Eshoo would be holding a Town Hall meeting in the Council Chambers on Saturday, December 3, at 10:00 a.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Warden stated that he would not remove any item, but noted that improvements had been made to the in-pavement crosswalk flashers. They worked better, especially at night. He expressed his ongoing concern for rear-end accidents.

Councilmember Bauer stated that the flashers heightened awareness of pedestrians in crosswalks, which was the intent.

ITEMS APPROVED ON CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of Minutes of Special and Regular Meeting of October 11, 2005, and Regular Meeting of October 25, 2005.

Motion Accepting Financial Statements for the City of Belmont FY 04-05.

Approval of Resolution 9714 Authorizing the Adoption of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program for Federally Funded Roadway Improvements for Use for U.S. Department of Transportation Funded Projects (Federal Fiscal Year 2005/2006).

Approval of Resolution 9715 Accepting Work, Approving As-Built Plans, and Authorization to Issue Notice of Substantial Completion for the Installation of In-Pavement Crosswalk Lights and Active School Zone Radar Signs, Republic Electric, City Contract Number 460.

Approval of Resolution 9716 Approving the Submittal of a Report in Compliance with Government Code Section 53411 for the Community Facilities District 2000-1 (Library Project).

Approval of Resolution 9717 Approving the Amended Joint Powers Agreement with the San Mateo County Narcotics Task Force, San Mateo County Sheriff's Office and Other San Mateo County Cities.

ACTION: On a motion made by Councilmember Mathewson, seconded by Councilmember Bauer, the Consent Calendar was unanimously approved by a show of hands.

HEARINGS

Public Hearing to Consider an Appeal of the Planning Commission Decision Denying a Floor Area Exception, Variance, Conditional Use Permit, and Single Family Design Review for Property Located at 2700 Monserat Avenue.

Community Development Director de Melo stated that new information had recently been received from the applicant on this matter, and he requested a postponement for further analysis.

Mayor Warden opened the hearing.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Bauer, seconded by Councilmember Metropulos the Public Hearing was unanimously continued to January 10, 2005.

Public Hearing to Consider a Mitigated Negative Declaration, General Plan Amendment, Conceptual Development Plan Amendment, and Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map for the Ralston Village Phase II Development for property located at 1301 Ralston Avenue (Ralston Village)

Community Development Director de Melo reviewed the hearings and discussions held by the Planning Commission during the past four years on this project. He also reviewed the 1987 Conceptual Development Plan and the 1988 Detailed Development Plan approved for this site.

Joel Roos, Pacific Coast Capital (on behalf of applicant), provided background of Pacific Coast's successful housing projects in other communities. He described the conceptual project for a 55-unit congregate care facility at Ralston Village, and noted that over 30 neighborhood

meetings had been held during the course of four years. The original plan of a total of 200,000 square feet was reduced to 140,000 square feet, with underground parking. He reviewed the details of the conceptual plan, and stated that the orientation of the project was designed to preserve trees and to provide setback from Ralston Avenue. He noted that the entire project was situated on flat land. He stated that the second highest senior population in San Mateo County is located in Belmont, and that the project would provide tax revenue, school impact fees, and park and recreation fees of \$700,000 to \$900,000. He also commented that seniors living in Belmont would relocate to this facility, thereby turning over their properties for additional property tax revenue.

In response to Council questions, Mr. Roos clarified that the units would be market rate, the minimum age limit was raised from 55 to 60, and building heights were proposed to be between 32 and 33 feet, with peaks of up to 40 feet. He stated that the HVAC equipment could be located subterranean or hidden in a false roof well. He responded that nothing in the 1987 documents indicate that the project is complete. He clarified that aging-in-place studies exist to substantiate the fact that Belmont seniors would move to these units. He added that a deed restriction would address the 60-year-old age limit.

Mayor Warden expressed concern regarding how to analyze the Belmont senior turnover as alleged by the applicant, and he would want to review that documentation to substantiate the tax increment.

Community Development Director de Melo stated that staff could provide an analysis, or an independent study could be sought. He commented that the information would be required to substantiate the General Plan and Detailed Development Plan amendments required by this proposal.

Councilmember Mathewson commented that Phase I, completed in 1987-88 which added 20,000 square feet to the property, required an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), but this proposal does not. He expressed concern for bulk, mass, and height of the proposal.

Community Development Director de Melo responded that an EIR was required in 1987, but that a mitigated negative declaration could satisfy the current proposal as long as the environmental issues were addressed.

Mr. Roos responded that this property represented transitional housing. He noted that higher density Notre Dame de Namur University and three and four story apartments are nearby.

In response to Councilmember Mathewson, Community Development Director de Melo clarified that a change to the Institution Zone designation to permit this project would affect all Institution zoned parcels throughout the City.

In response to Councilmember Bauer, Community Development Director de Melo stated that there have been concerns regarding the economic impact of the number of 9-1-1 calls from the existing Ralston Village facility.

Belmont Police Sargeant Halleran reviewed the 9-1-1 call volume, and noted that the greatest impact is on fire/paramedic staff. The current call volume represents a higher percentage than other senior care facilities in Belmont.

Councilmember Feierbach reviewed the 1988 entitlements regarding this site. She stated the intent was to permit limited increase in use, and to maintain open space. The 1988 Planning Commission, of which she was a member, increased the square footage on this property by 20,000, and the intent was that this increase would maximize the use of the property. The intent at that time also was to merge three parcels, which was a condition of approval, and should have satisfied the General Plan. She noted that the merger never happened.

Community Development Director de Melo stated that the 1988 expansion may have been deemed to meet the General Plan goal. He noted this property is a Planned Development (PD), and the applicant can seek an amendment to the PD, and that a General Plan amendment is also required to accommodate this project. He clarified that there is no existing condition of approval stating that the 1988 expansion was final. He noted that there are three school and two church sites which would be affected by a General Plan amendment to an Institutional zone.

Discussion ensued.

Mayor Warden opened the Public Hearing.

Jacki Horton, Chula Vista Drive, stated she endorsed this proposed project as a reasonable and viable plan. She noted that the project was redesigned over the course of several years based on community input. The project was presented to the McDougal Neighborhood Association, where concerns were expressed regarding what other uses could be accommodated on this site should this project not be approved as proposed. She noted that the General Plan permits medical office use in this zone designation. She commented that she would move if offices were placed on this site.

Carolyn Thompson, Ralston Avenue, stated that she attended many of the meetings held and she supports the project. It is compatible with the neighborhood. She expressed concerns regarding traffic.

Gary Swanson, Chula Vista Drive, stated that he does not support medical offices for this site, and supports the residential project as presented. He noted the project had been scaled down. He expressed concerns regarding traffic and the character of the neighborhood.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Bauer, seconded by Councilmember Mathewson, the Public Hearing was unanimously closed by a show of hands.

Community Development Director de Melo stated that the Planning Commission's vote on this project was split 3-3 (one member recused). The Commission's concerns were noted and the project was forwarded with no recommendation based on the split vote.

Councilmember Feierbach expressed concerns regarding the General Plan and future developments of this property. She stated that mobile senior residents will use cars, adding to traffic problems. There is no guarantee that Belmont seniors will relocate to this facility and release their homes to provide higher tax revenue to the City. The intent in 1988 was that that expansion was final. She understands the neighbors' concerns regarding future uses. Other projects in Belmont have been approved because of fears of actions of future Councils. This proposal does not conform to the General Plan.

Councilmember Metropulos stated this proposal is an example of the need to update the General Plan. Eventually something will be built, and owners have a right to build. A project with the least impact would be desirable. He is concerned about traffic, and the project was scaled down because of traffic concerns. Questions need to be answered regarding the financial analysis before approval can be given.

Councilmember Mathewson stated he shared concerns regarding traffic. This is a quality of life issue, and even a small amount of additional traffic may be too much. A more detailed fiscal analysis is needed. This project is not in character with single-family homes.

Councilmember Bauer stated he was pleased to see the concerns of the neighborhood addressed. He stated that the majority of traffic in Belmont is from those who live in Belmont. This proposed project might not impact peak traffic patterns. He noted that this property is adjacent to the park and within walking distance of many services. The community has changed since 1988. He supports the project.

Mayor Warden stated that he does not want to make a decision out of fear of what could be built. He cited examples of decisions on other projects in Belmont, such as Agape, Davey Glen, and Summerhill Homes, which were made despite fear of what could be built. He understands the neighbors' fear of medical use of this parcel. The 1988 project fulfilled the General Plan, and the lots were to be merged. He noted the original proposal for Ralston Village was not for condos. This proposal would add 500 car trips per day. It may not be the right project for this property, but may be good elsewhere. Some projects are not meant to be. The neighbors might prefer single-family homes on this site. He added that voters should vote for Councilmembers who will make good decisions for the community.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Metropulos, seconded by Councilmember Bauer, to continue the Public Hearing for additional financial analysis. Motion failed by a vote of 2-3 (Metropulos/Bauer yes, Mathewson/Feierbach/Warden, no).

Mayor Warden expressed concerns regarding the basis for the financial analysis. Council should deny or continue the matter, and a decision should not be forced.

RECESS: 9:30 P.M.
RECONVENE: 9:45 P.M.

Councilmember Mathewson stated that the applicant deserves a decision. He commented that the proposed project is too big, massive and is not in keeping with the neighborhood. He does not

want to make sweeping changes to zoning that will affect other properties. He expressed concerns regarding the financial analysis and traffic. The proposal does not meet the guidelines, and the General Plan goals have been fulfilled with the existing use.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Mathewson, seconded by Councilmember Feierbach, and approved by a vote of 4-1 (Bauer no) to deny a General Plan Amendment, Conceptual Development Plan Amendment, and Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map for the Ralston Village Phase II Development for property located at 1301 Ralston Avenue (Ralston Village).

Community Development Director de Melo stated that a resolution of denial would be placed on the next agenda.

OLD BUSINESS

Priority Calendar - Step Two: Adopting the Calendar

Interim Assistant City Manager Gonzalez reviewed the proposed Project Description Forms and the six-month Priority Calendar. She noted that four new projects would commence during the next phase. The only ranked project set below the line is Creek Restoration.

Mayor Warden noted that few new items were considered for the Calendar while the Community Development Department implements changes as a result of the Permit Efficiency Task Force recommendations.

ACTION: On a motion by Councilmember Metropulos, seconded by Councilmember Mathewson, the Project Description Forms and Priority Calendar were approved as presented.

Interim City Manager Crist noted that Interim Assistant City Manager Gonzalez has been working in Belmont on a short-term basis from Redwood City, and he commended her for her work on this project. Council concurred that she has done a good job during her time in Belmont.

COMMISSION, COMMITTEE, AND COUNCIL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ASSIGNMENT UPDATES, AND STAFF ITEMS

Emergency Preparedness Report to Update the City Council on the City's Preparedness for Disasters

Police Chief Mattei stated that disaster planning is important considering the global incidents over the past year. He noted it is important for people to plan for self-preservation in the event of a disaster. He stated that staff developed an emergency preparedness booklet for Belmont residents, which is available on the website. He announced the County Emergency Preparedness Workshop to be held on November 12 at the Expo Center.

Sergeant Halleran outlined the types of emergencies that could affect San Mateo County. He reviewed the structure of emergency management, as well as an organizational chart, and outlined the County's role in disaster planning. He reviewed previous emergency plans, ongoing training, and the upcoming drill to be held on November 15 in Belmont's new Emergency Operations Center. He explained the role of CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team) in the

event of a disaster, and announced upcoming training opportunities. He reviewed the Belmont handbook, which also contains on-line resource and contact information.

In response to Councilmember Bauer, Chief Mattei stated that emergency equipment should be stored in a backpack or large plastic bins, and that bottled water should be rotated out to ensure freshness.

In response to Councilmember Feierbach, **Brian Molver**, County of San Mateo, responded that the City of Belmont has resources in place. Functions are standardized, and are practiced and tested twice annually. Relationships exist between City, County, State and Federal resources. Communities need to take responsibility for themselves, and CERT programs are invaluable.

Police Chief Mattei stated that the Safe Schools program also addresses disasters, and parents have assurance that their children are safe at school in the event of an emergency. The use of CERT volunteers will be invaluable during an emergency. He noted that Belmont resources may be diverted to other regions during a disaster.

Interim City Manager Crist stated that Belmont has an excellent emergency preparedness program, and improvements will be made regarding the role of the Mayor and City Council in an emergency. He recommended an annual discussion on this topic, and that Council should participate in emergency exercises.

MEETING EXTENSION: At this time, being 10:30 P.M. on a motion by Councilmember Mathewson, seconded by Councilmember Metropulos, the meeting was unanimously extended by 30 minutes by a show of hands.

MATTERS OF COUNCIL INTEREST/CLARIFICATION

Discussion and Direction regarding Planning Commission Vacancy (Warden).

Mayor Warden stated that with the pending resignation of Commissioner Dickenson due to his election to City Council, he was concerned about having an even number of Planning Commissioners, and recommended that Council appoint someone to fill the vacancy.

Community Development Director de Melo stated that the even number could have an impact on an upcoming project before the Commission.

Bill Dickenson, Planning Commissioner/Councilmember-Elect, stated that the Planning Commission Chair expressed concern regarding a tie vote.

Rick Frautschi, Planning Commissioner, recommended that if Council were to consider an appointment, it appoint someone with prior experience.

Councilmember Feierbach recommended checking with the Commissioners whose terms are up in March.

Councilmember Bauer suggested having an individual Commissioner sit out for each meeting.

City Attorney Zafferano recommended a future agenda item to further discuss this issue.

Mayor Warden stated he supported Councilmember Bauer's suggestion.

Council concurred to discuss this item at the next Council meeting.

Discussion and Direction regarding Placing City's website address on city limit signs (Warden)

Mayor Warden stated that during his travels to other cities, they post their website address on signs at city limits, and recommended doing the same for Belmont. He noted this is a good resource, especially for business visitors.

Council concurred to have a future agenda item to discuss options.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 10:40 P.M.

Terri Cook
Belmont City Clerk

Meeting Tape Recorded and Videotaped
Audio Recording 621
Minutes approved 12/13/2005